



News Release

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

The Idaho Water Center, 322 E. Front St., Boise, ID - TEL: (208) 287-4800 FAX: (208) 287-6700
www.idwr.idaho.gov

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For Media Information Contact:
Don Shaff, 208-287-4921

SRBA Court Receives Final Water Right Recommendations

The final report of water right claims for the Snake River Basin Adjudication was sent to the SRBA District Court in Twin Falls on Feb. 21, culminating nearly 20 years of investigating water right claims by the Idaho Department of Water Resources.

With the filing of this final report, more than 148,000 claims were reported to the court by IDWR during the course of the SRBA, considered the largest undertaking of its kind in the country.

“The IDWR success to reach this milestone is shared by the claimants, large and small, the state and federal agencies, and the SRBA court, which cooperated and shared a common goal to reach this point in the SRBA,” says David R. Tuthill, interim director for the Idaho Department of Water Resources.

The SRBA began Nov. 19, 1987, when the District Court of the Fifth Judicial District of the State of Idaho, in Twin Falls County, designated by the Idaho Supreme Court, issued the commencement order to begin the massive water right lawsuit.

All of the data and documents are now available via the Internet for wide public use. IDWR will continue to work with the claimants and the court to decree the remaining SRBA water rights and finalize the decree for the case.

“When the court finishes the decree process, the SRBA will leave a legacy of cataloged water rights tied to computer maps,” says Don Shaff, Adjudication Bureau chief. “This will enable the state to administer water rights and develop plans with confidence for the water resources in the area of the SRBA.”

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According to Eric Wildman, Staff Attorney for the SRBA Court, “To date, the SRBA has decreed 128,544 water rights. The objection periods for the recently issued Director’s Reports will expire towards the end of this year. We anticipate that the majority of the remaining claims will take two to three years to work through the process to resolution.”

Other achievements in the SRBA were the settlement and agreements with the Shoshone Bannock Tribes, the Nez Perce Tribe, the Shoshone Paiute Tribes, the federal claims for wild and scenic rivers, and other federal agency reservation claims.

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